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Australia does her part



(Especially prepared for the CONSUMER TIME radio program of June 24, 1944 by the Foreign Economic Administration.)

"An Army Marches on Its..."

When Napoleon said that an army marched on its stomach, he was describing warfare prior to the era of the thirty-knot troop ship, the jet plane and the 400-mile-an-hour fighter. Yet with all this acceleration, an army still marches on its stomach, as any mess sergeant will testify. It floats and flies on its stomach, too. Indeed, the speeding up of the movement of modern warfare, extension of supply lines and expansion of arenas of action, have created problems of commissary, transport and medical service more difficult than those of any previous war.

Today American troops are in action in jungles and mountain passes five thousand miles and more from their home bases. Yet despite this remoteness, they are fed adequately and their wounds treated quickly and effectively. They draw upon rations grown thousands of miles from their homeland, their wounds are treated with medicines produced in towns they had never heard of, they have surgical care and the most modern hospital service without leaving the war area. The explanation is combined planning of production and distribution, through lend-lease and reverse lend-lease.

Australia Furnishes Food

The story of food in the Pacific is illustrative. Ninety percent of the food needed by our troops in the Southwest Pacific is grown in Australia

and New Zealand and furnished our Quartermaster Corps by those countries without cost to us. We receive it as reverse lend-lease, the corollary of direct lend-lease; by these instruments we supply Australia and our other fighting allies with war materials and in turn are aided by them. The effect of this two-way lend-lease is a sharing of assets by all of the allies engaged in a war that has a single objective for all of the United Nations--the defeat of the common enemy in the shortest possible time.

We have supplied Australia some \$735,000,000 worth of munitions, planes, tanks, and other industrial supplies and agricultural equipment. Australia in turn has made available to our men in the Pacific hundreds of thousands of tons of food, and additional hospitals, supplies, equipment, clothing and services vital to the war effort. To the first of January, 1944, Australia had given us more than half a billion pounds of food and other aid amounting to over \$360,000,000. In the last few months Australia has been providing us with as much reverse lend-lease aid as we have been shipping to her under out-going lend-lease.

Value of Lend-Lease

It is all quite reasonable--the United States is a giant industrial producer far removed from the battle area, Australia is an agricultural nation close to the scene of the fighting. Their assets are complementary.

Without lend-lease the United

States would be obliged to use more of our domestic food supplies to meet the food requirements of our troops in the Pacific or purchase foods from other nations. If we had to ship more food from this country, we would be obliged to curtail the supply of our civilians and then use space in our ships for food that we are now using for munitions.

Instead we pooled our resources. Our forces needed Australia's food. Australia's forces needed the additional munitions we could supply for fighting the Japanese beside our own troops. So we used our great war production capacity to make weapons for Australia's armed forces as well as our own. Australia in turn concentrated on her agricultural production. We also supplied to Australia small quantities of agricultural equipment, tin for canning, dehydration and canning equipment, seeds and fertilizers. These shipments, which took up only a comparatively small amount of shipping space, enabled Australia to increase tremendously its production of food for our forces. The result--shipping space was freed to carry munitions from the American plants in greater volume to Australian forces as well as our own. The Australians provided more food and supplies to the American troops as they arrived, and threatened red tape and delay were eliminated. All without exchange of money. That was two-way lend-lease in operation.

Food Only One Item

In this program, food is only one of the hundreds of items we receive from Australia. They range from tea and razor blades to airfields and concrete mixers. The Quartermaster receives apples, apricots, asparagus, bacon, bananas, beans, beef, beets, biscuits, cheese, cherries, cinnamon, cloves, cocoa, coffee, corn, cream, cucumbers, currants, and so on for the other 23 letters of the alphabet. He gets knives, forks and spoons; kitchen

equipment of every kind; horses and harnesses; clothing of all sorts--shirts, trousers, socks, gloves, hats, nurses' garments; soap and toothpaste and razor blades; matches; paints and lacquers and brushes of all kinds; insecticides and disinfectants and sprayers to use them; gas and oil drums; hand tools of all kinds; blankets and shoes; trawlers and launches and ketches and anything else on the coast of Australia that can float and will be used to run supplies in and around New Guinea and New Britain.

Nor is the Quartermaster the only recipient. The Medical Corps receives hospitals, hospital trains, hospital laundries, and hospitalization in Australian civilian hospitals; beds and bedding; kitchen and mess equipment; stretchers and dressings. By and large, Australia is not a producer of drugs; she is an importer from Britain and ourselves. But when we need some drug or other, it is willingly made available to us within the limits of Australia's capacity to supply from its dwindling stores.

From Air Fields to Insulators

The Engineers receive airfields, barracks and office buildings, observation and control towers, warehousing facilities, sewage, water and electrical utilities, wharves, jetties and docks, laundries and workshops of all kinds, earth-moving equipment, cranes, rollers and scrapers; concrete mixers and cement; water tanks; timber and timber saws; refrigeration equipment of all kinds, insulators, engines; fire extinguishers; pumps; rope, barbed wire; spare parts of all kinds. The list is endless. The Signal Corps, Transportation Corps, Special Services Section, Air Corps, and the other branches of the armed forces are recipients too.

From Australia (thru January 1, 1944) we have already received more than a million blankets for our troops, and among the foods, 100,000,000 pounds of

bread and cereals, 76,000,000 pounds of beef, 28,000,000 pounds of pork, 91,000,000 pounds of canned foods, 32,000,000 dozens of eggs, 28,000,000 pounds of sugar, 97,000,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables.

A jeep or a tank breaks down thousands of miles from the factory that built it--Australia provides the spare parts to get it back in operation. American soldiers racked by wounds and disease come out of the jungles needing expert treatment--Australia takes them into its largest and most modern hospital which has been turned over in its entirety to our boys. Australia found a strain on her potato supply because of the influx of American troops for the Pacific fighting--potatoes were placed on the civilian ration list until the American troops were assured a sufficient supply.

To Strike the Common Enemy!

We needed airfields for our planes, barracks for our troops, freight cars and warehouses and stevedoring service for our ships and supplies, flying jackets and jungle kits for our pilots, rehabilitation facilities for our wounded and athletic equipment to keep our men occupied. Australia provided all these as reverse lend-lease. And the list would go on for hundreds of pages if they were set

down in any detail--belly tanks for various kinds of planes, cord for opening parachute packs, chutes for fragmentation bombs.

Australia is spending about a million dollars a day to provide this assistance. The cost represents about 18 percent of her war budget. The United States is spending about 14 percent of her war budget on direct lend-lease to all allies. The benefits to both nations are tremendous. From the standpoint of this Nation, the first advantage is our ability to insure adequate supplies for our men in the field, in the form of food and medical treatment, recreational equipment and those other essentials. The effect upon our domestic agricultural picture is striking too. We have sent about \$5,000,000 of agricultural equipment, seeds and fertilizers to Australia. We have received (through January 1, 1944) about \$100,000,000 worth of food and expect to receive between \$150,000,000 and \$200,000,000 worth this year.

And this system, too, has had the healthful effect of strengthening the two Nations in the single fight, emphasizing to both the importance and the wisdom of cooperative action in welding together the assets of both, to the end that a common enemy may be struck the harder and the more effectively, in the great fight which the United Nations are waging.

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